

ABSTRACT

An extracting method of a pattern contour, includes acquiring an image of a pattern to be inspected, calculating a schematic edge position of the pattern from the image, preparing 5 an approximate polygon by approximating a polygon consisting of edges having predetermined direction components to a contour shape of the pattern on the basis of the calculated edge position, dividing the approximate polygon into star-shaped polygons, calculating the position of a kernel of the star-shaped polygon, and searching 10 an edge of the pattern in a direction connecting the kernel to an arbitrary point positioned on the edge of the approximate polygon.